

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

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AMEMBASSY GABORONE
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AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY MASERU
AMEMBASSY MBABANE
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE
AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE
USUN MISSION NEW YORK 2200

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 14053

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, NI, SF, US
SUBJECT: OBASANJO'S CONVERSATION DECEMBER 10 WITH SENATOR CLARK:
SOUTH AFRICA (LAST OF FIVE SEPTELS)

REF: LAGOS 13944 (NOTAL)

1. OBASANJO SAID THAT NIGERIA'S VIEWS ON SOUTH AFRICA WERE
"SIMPLE AND STRAIGHTFORWARD." NIGERIA WANTS TO SEE AN
END TO THE POLICY OF APARTHEID ACD SUPPORTS THE PRINCIPLE OF
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ONE MAN, ONE VOTE FOR ALL SOUTH AFRICA. IT WOULD BE TRAGIC
IF THESE OBJECTIVES COULD NOT BE ACHIEVED "IN HARMONY, PEACE
AND CONCORD" AND IF THE "FREEDOM FIGHTERS" WERE TO ADOPT
VIOLENCE AS THE MEANS OF ATTAINING THESE GOALS.

2. THE WORLD LOOKS TO THE US TO INITIATE ACTION TO BRING

DOWN APARTHEID. NIGERIA IS NOT REPEAT NOT TALKING ABOUT MILITARY ACTION "OR EVEN ABOUT EMBARGOES." WITH THE NECESSARY POLITICAL WILL ON THE PART OF THE US ADMINISTRATION, A RANGE OF LESSER PRESSURES COULD BE EXERTED. THESE SHOULD BE FOCUEED ON SOUTH AFRICA'S ECONOMIC LINKAGES WITH THE WESTERN WORLD. OBASANJO SAID HE RECOGNIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE WEST'S STRATEGIC AND MILITARY INTEREST IN SOUTH AFRICA. HE ARUGUED THAT THE PRESENT TREND OF CIRCUMSTANCES WITHIN SOUTH AFRICA, IF NOT HALTED BY THE KIND OF ACTIONS HE RECOMMENDED, WOULD FATALLY JEOPARDIZE THOSE INTERESTS.

3. SENATOR CLARK REVIEWED THE EXTENT OF US ECONOMIC COMMITMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA, CITING 300 COMPANIES, \$1.6 BILLION INVESTMENT, 14 PERCENT OF TOTAL FOREIGN INVESTMENT, AND EMPLOYMENT OF 2 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL SOUTH AFRICAN LABOR FORCE. CLARK OBSERVED THAT THE RELATIVE MODESTY OF THESE FIGURES HAS TO BE BALANCED AGAINST THE PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE THAT SOUTH AFRICANS ATTACH TO US ATTITUDES ABOUT THEM. NONETHELESS, CLARK WONDERED WHAT REAL EFFECT US DISINVESTMENT, FOR EXAMPLE, MIGHT HAVE IF OTHERS DID NOT DO THE SAME. HOW COULD ONE ENCOURAGE THE UNITED KINGDOM, FOR EXAMPLE, TO FOLLOW SUIT WHEN ITS OWN ECONOMY WAS IN SUCH DISTRESS? WOULD THERE NOT BE WILLING SUBSTITUTES IN ANY CASE? CLARK CONCLUDED HE REMAINED SKEPTICAL OF UTILITY OF SUCH ECONOMIC PRESSURES, ALTHOUGH HE ADMITTED HE SAW SOME MERIT ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ARGUMENT.

4. OBASANJO SAID HE RECOGNIZED THE VALIDITY OF CLARK'S POINTS. HE NONETHELESS BELIEVED THAT FIRM US LEADERSHIP WOULD BRING OTHER COUNTRIES ALONG, HOWEVER RELUCTANTLY. CHIEF-OF-STAFF YAR-ADUA INTERJECTED THAT THE US "SURELY SHOULD BE ABLE TO INFLUENCE JAPAN AND GERMANY." EXTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMISSIONER GARBA
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OBSERVED THAT THE FUTURE OF THESE INVESTMENTS WAS ENDANGERED IN ANY CASE BY CONTINUED LACK OF PROGRESS TOWARD RACIAL EQUALITY. HE THEN CITED POINTS MADE BY AMERICAN PARTICIPANTS IN THE RECENT AAI CONFERENCE IN MASERU TO THE EFFECT THAT THE THREAT OF ECONOMIC PRESSURES COULD BE AS EFFECTIVE AS THEIR ACTUAL APPLICATION. HE SUGGESTED THAT SUCH THREATS BE COUPLED WITH A DEMAND FOR A SOUTH AFRICAN TIMETABLE FOR PROGRESSIVE DISMANTLEMENT OF THE APARTHEID SYSTEM.

5. OBASANJO CONCLUDED WITH THE OBSERVATION THAT THE "EASTERN POWERS" WILL DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO CAPITALIZE ON CONTINUING SOUTH AFRICAN OBSTINACY. THEY WILL BE TRYING TO FOMENT DISORDER AND CHAOS. THUS IT WOULD BE IN THE LOGICAL SERVICE OF WESTERN STRATEGIC AND ECONOMIC INTERESTS IN SOULH AFRICA TO GET STARTED NOW ON A BASIC REVISION OF THE SOCIAL ARRANGEMENTS IN THAT SOCIETY. NIGERIA LOOKED TO THE NEW US ADMINISTRATION FOR AN EARLY COMMITMENT TO SUCH AN EFFORT.
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